

Message Text

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16

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CU-04 PA-03 PRS-01 USIA-12 CIAE-00

INR-09 NSAE-00 RSC-01 /043 W
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FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4056
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS JERUSALEM 272

E. O. 11652: N/ A
TAGS: SCUL, IS, JO
SUBJECT: WEST BANK UNIVERSITY

REF: AMMAN 1317

1. REPORT CARRIED IN AL DESTOUR (REFTEL) IS CORRECT. WE WOULD NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT UNIVERSITY CONCEPT HAS HAD DE FACTO GOI APPROVAL SINCE YIGAL ALLON GAVE HIS BLESSING TO IDEA ON OCTOBER 3, 1972, AFTER MEETING WITH PREPARATORY COMMITTEE TO ESTABLISH UNIVERSITY. GOI SANCTION, WHILE OBVIOUSLY ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITE, WAS ANTICIPATED AND DOES NOT IMPLY THAT WEST BANK UNIVERSITY IS ABOUT TO COME INTO BEING. ISRAELI EMBRACE OF PROJECT HAS IN FACT BEEN AN EMBARRASSMENT TO ITS PROMOTERS.

2. REAL PROBLEMS CONFRONTING WEST BANK UNIVERSITY ARE (A) RECOGNITION BY ARAB WORLD, PARTICULARLY JORDAN, AND (B) FINANCIAL. EVEN MEMBERS OF PREPARATORY COMMITTEE ARE FRANK TO ADMIT THAT A WEST BANK UNIVERSITY WHICH IS NOT ACCREDITED BY FEDERATION OF ARAB UNIVERSITIES AND NOT RECOGNIZED BY ARAB GOVERNMENTS WOULD BE DOOMED TO FAILURE. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT TO DATE GOJ IS STAUNCHLY OPPOSED TO UNIVERSITY, WHICH WAS OFFICIALLY CONDEMNED BY MINISTER OF EDUCATION (FARHAN) ON OCTOBER 22, 1972. ANY CHANGE IN GOJ ATTITUDE TOWARD UNIVERSITY WOULD BE OF INTEREST. AS REGARDS FINANCING, THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT MONEY EXISTS ON WEST BANK TO ESTABLISH AND SUPPORT A UNIVERSITY. MEMBERS OF PREPARATORY
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COMMITTEE ARE IN GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT FUNDS WILL HAVE TO BE RAISED IN ARAB WORLD, AND ADMIT THAT UNLESS UNIVERSITY RECOGNIZED AND ACCEPTED BY ARAB STATES THERE LITTLE PROSPECT OF RAISING MONEY.

3. SEVERAL SEGMENTS OF PROPOSED UNIVERSITY ARE ALREADY FUNCTIONING. THERE HAS LONG BEEN AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE IN TULKAGY, AND ISLAMIC STUDIES CENTER (OF VERY MODEST PROPORTIONS) WAS RECENTLY ESTABLISHED IN HEBRON. TULKARM INSTITUTE, WHICH HAS LARGE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM, HAD PLANNED TO EXPAND TO FOUR YEARS BUT SCRAPPED PLAN BECAUSE IT COULD NOT OBTAIN GOJ APPROVAL. TO BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE ONLY EDUCATIONAL PROJECT ON WEST BANK WHICH HAS GOJ APPROVAL IS EXPANSION OF BIR ZEIT COLLEGE FROM TWO TO FOUR YEARS.
DAY

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

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